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SUBJECT: AU-UN: SECURITY COUNCIL DIVIDED ON UN ASSESSED
CONTRIBUTIONS AS A FUNDING OPTION

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11. SUMMARY. In an October 26 open debate on support for African Union peacekeeping, Security Council members expressed divergent views on whether UN assessed contributions were a viable option to finance AU peacekeeping operations authorized by the Security Council. Uganda, Libya and Burkina Faso urged the Council to use UN assessed contributions to fund such missions, since, they said, other modalities of financing African peacekeeping missions had proven inadequate. The United States, Russia and Japan said they could not support the regular use of assessed contributions, though they acknowledged the previous use of such financing methods in the past in exceptional circumstances. The United Kingdom, Austria, China, Croatia, Mexico and Turkey said that all modalities of support (including assessed contributions) should be considered. Several members, including Russia, France and the U.S. supported the use of multi-donor trust funds. Former Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi urged the Council to consider the use of assessed contributions, as did representatives of the AU, Nigeria, South Africa and Brazil, with the latter two suggesting that the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations ("C-34") and the Fifth Committee could take up the issue. Council members broadly supported enhanced strategic cooperation between the AU Commission and the UN Secretariat, and between the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council. Members also supported efforts to build the institutional capacity of the AU to plan, manage and carry-out peacekeeping operations. END SUMMARY.

Background

12. On October 26, the Security Council held an open debate to review the Secretary-General's September 18 Report on "Support to African Union peacekeeping operations authorized by the United Nations" (S/2009/470). The Council had requested the report in a March 18 Presidential Statement (PRST) following a debate on the recommendations of a high-level AU-UN panel led by former Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi (the "Prodi panel"), which had been formed to examine the "modalities of support to African Union peacekeeping operations" (S/2008/813). Three key Prodi panel recommendations analyzed in the September 18 SYG's report were: the need for an enhanced strategic partnership between the AU Commission and the UN Secretariat, and between the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council; the need to build the institutional capacity of the African Union to plan, manage and carry out peacekeeping operations; and the need to improve the sustainability, predictability and feasibility of financial support for AU-led, UN-authorized peacekeeping operations through the use of UN assessed contributions, on a case-by-case basis, in cases where the Council intended to transition the AU mission to a UN mission.

Funding Modalities for AU Missions

¶3. Undersecretary-General for Peacekeeping Alain LeRoy told the Council that several aspects of AU-UN cooperation required immediate action, including restructuring the UN presence in Addis Ababa, creating a joint AU-UN task force on peace and security to review immediate short and long-term strategic and operational issues, and engaging in institutional capacity building of the AU. LeRoy said that if the international community were to ask the AU to intervene in the initial stages of a crisis due to the AU's flexibility to act quickly, then the international community also needed to provide resources in a sustainable and predictable manner.

LeRoy reviewed the five different funding mechanisms that had been examined in the Secretary-General's report: African Union assessed contributions; contributions through individual African Union troop contributing countries; voluntary contributions from international donors; UN support packages through assessed contributions; and a combination of the above. Though LeRoy did not offer recommendations as to which funding option was the most viable, he said that experience with the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the AU-UN Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) had shown that existing funding mechanisms for AU missions had not proved adequate. He noted that the Prodi panel had recommended the use of UN assessed funding for AU-led, UN-authorized peacekeeping missions, and that a multi-donor trust fund, as part of the African Union Peace Fund, would be one option to provide predictability and sustainability for mounting a peacekeeping operation.

¶4. Uganda, Libya and Burkina Faso all offered explicit

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support for the use of assessed contributions to fund AU peacekeeping operations. The Ugandan representative said he had hoped the Council would make a "firm commitment" to support the Prodi-panel recommendation for the use of assessed contributions, since the Council had delayed action on the recommendation in March. He said that only a small portion of the confirmed pledges from donors had been disbursed for AMISOM, while forces were taking fire on the ground on behalf of the international community. It was not enough for the Council to "undertake to keep all options under consideration", he said, referring to the language of a draft Presidential Statement that was set to be adopted at the end of the meeting. The Libyan representative echoed the Ugandan's sentiment, saying he "doubted" that voluntary contributions to the AU Peace Fund would provide sufficient resources for AU missions. The UN spends "huge sums" for peacekeeping missions in areas of less threat than Somalia, he added. He suggested that if the international community had spent the equivalent amount of money in Somalia as had been spent fighting piracy off the coast on Somalia, then "piracy would have disappeared."

¶5. The United States, Russia and Japan all underscored that AU peacekeeping missions should be fully resourced, but said they could not support the use of assessed contributions on a regular basis. Ambassador Rice said the United States would continue to be a major bilateral contributor to African peace operations, and would continue to support training and equipping initiatives. She also offered U.S. support for the use of a multi-donor trust fund. Rice explained that the U.S. had supported assessed contributions for AMISOM on an exceptional basis, but was "unable to make any broad commitment to support such arrangements in future operations." The Russian representative also said that the AMISOM logistical support package was a "one-off," and that it would be premature to "make it more regular." He said that the burden of funding AU missions should lie "first and foremost" with AU member states, but he welcomed the use of a multi-donor trust fund as part of the AU Peace Fund. The

Japanese representative said AU-led, UN authorized peacekeeping missions should be funded through the AU budget and voluntary contributions. He added that UN assessed contributions for AU peacekeeping operations did not conform to the established rules of UN procedure as provided for under the UN charter.

¶16. The United Kingdom, Austria, Croatia, Turkey, China and Mexico emphasized that all of the modalities of support for AU peacekeeping outlined by the SYG, including assessed contributions, should be considered for future operations. Costa Rica and Vietnam acknowledged the need for AU peacekeeping to be fully resourced, but did not make specific mention of assessed contributions. France emphasized its preference to support AU peacekeeping operations through a multi-donor trust fund. France also said that the practice of assessed contributions could lead to serious political, legal and financial problems, though it did not specifically oppose this option. COMMENT. In negotiations over the PRST, France made clear that it strongly opposed the use of assessed contributions; France may not have specifically ruled out the option in its public statement, due to the agreed EU position that no option should be ruled out. END COMMENT.

¶17. Sweden, speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the EU was committed to seeking pragmatic and effective ways by which partners could support the development of the AU peace and security architecture. The EU, he said, would not rule out any option currently being studied, but recognized that every "modality of support" must be accompanied by appropriate accountability mechanisms. The Swedish representative also noted the contributions of EU members to the African Peace Facility, which serves as an important funding tool for African peacekeeping.

¶18. South Africa, Brazil, Nigeria and Tunisia supported the use of assessed contributions and the creation of a multi-donor trust fund. South Africa suggested that the General Assembly should review the Secretary-General's recommendations for funding mechanisms, just as the Security Council was doing. The Brazil representative also said he expected the question of support for AU peacekeeping to be raised in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) and in the Fifth (Budgetary) Committee.

¶19. Mr. Prodi urged the Council to consider the use of assessed contributions to fund AU peacekeeping, saying it was "unrealistic to continue to deal with Africa in a bilateral way." The existing strengths of the AU were not sufficient, he said, to tackle its current problems, and the international community needed to give the AU resources to

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develop over the long-term.

AU Capacity Building and AU-UN Strategic Cooperation

¶10. In contrast to the differing views on the modalities of financial support for AU peacekeeping, Council members broadly supported enhanced strategic cooperation between the AU Commission and the UN Secretariat, and between the UN Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council as outlined in the SYG's report. Several members welcomed the intention of the Secretary-General to set up a joint AU-UN task force on peace and security to review immediate and long-term strategic and operational issues. Other members welcomed efforts by the Secretary-General to recalibrate the UN presence in Addis Ababa.

¶11. Council members also overwhelmingly supported efforts to build the institutional capacity of the AU to plan, manage and carry-out peacekeeping operations. Ambassador Rice welcomed the intention of the African Union to develop a long-term capacity building roadmap, and emphasized the need

to build capacity not only for peacekeeping, but for mediation, crisis management, post-conflict reconstruction, civil institutions and civil society. France, Russia, Japan, Turkey and the United States highlighted their bilateral efforts to build African capacity in peacekeeping through training programs.

¶12. A full transcript of the open debate can be found on the Security Council website: www.un.org/docs/sc
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